

Summer Technology Academy/ITE



Life is sweet for

student chocolatiers

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Last summer was a busy one for the students and dedicated design and technology staff at Worden Sports College who were involved in the schools first ever Summer Technology Academy.

Organised and delivered by the design and technology department this was by no means a new venture for some of the team. Keith Burroughs (Head of Faculty) and Scott Cunningham (Teacher of Resistant Materials) had both been involved every year since 2005 in the schools summer academies project with Suzie Carr (Teacher of Food Technology/Catering and newly appointed Head of PHSE) involved since 2007. Previously the event had been staged by the PE department and as such had a very different focus.

Having been approached to co-ordinate the event Suzie and Scott quickly enlisted the help of Keith Burroughs, Art teacher Chris Hull and several trainee teachers from Edge Hill University.

Trainees from both the Flexible PGCE and BSc (Hons) in Design and Technology courses supported staff for the duration of the project and as Dawne explains "Worden have a very strong department and have consistently provided excellent support for our trainee teachers over many years. Students are not the only beneficiaries of extra curricula activities and when Suzie approached me to ask if any of our students could support the summer academy I knew they would gain a wealth of experience from participating in the project".

The summer school consisted of twenty gifted and talented students. The programme was delivered over eight days and was designed to enable students to develop their communication skills and creative problem solving abilities through design and technology based tasks. The activities also fostered links with business and enterprise and aspects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

The Programme

Day one

Day one began with an opening assembly attended by parents and involved a number of team building games and activities. This was followed by an introduction to the brief and an outline of activities for the week; to design, create, manufacture and market confectionary products. The process began with some market research where students used the schools ICT suites to research the brief. The three teams decided on their names, 'Cherries Chocolates', 'Croco-chocs' and 'Umpa Lumpas'.

Day two

Having learnt about some of the history of chocolate they had an introduction to enterprise, marketing and product branding. Students then began to develop design ideas for their chocolates, then using modelling materials began to make 'plugs' which could be vacuum formed and used for the chocolate moulds.

Day three

Manufacture of the moulds and 'product development' (playing with chocolate and fillings which actually involved quite a lot of taste testing). Students began to design, create packaging design and continuing development of the point of sale display.

Day four

Day four was an industrious day of developing, testing and making point-of-sale items, products and packaging. At this stage students also began to devise and plan through 'drama games', their commercials to advertise their confectionery.



Day two: Students begin to develop design ideas for their chocolates



Day three: Students play with chocolate and fillings which actually involved quite a lot of taste testing



Day one: Students research the brief



Day four: Students make point-of-sale

Day five

An industrial visit to Cadbury's World in Birmingham provided students with the opportunity to see how chocolates are manufactured (and engaged in some taste testing again).

Day six

This was spent creating 'props' for use in the marketing/recording of the television advertising campaigns and completion of packaging and production of 'designer' chocolates.

Day seven

During day seven students worked to complete the manufacture of merchandise to promote their companies and recording of commercials. Extension activities included the development and production of the invitations for the rewards assembly.

Day eight

The final day was spent finishing off displays and editing commercials prior to the presentation assembly. Parents and family were invited to attend in the afternoon where students were able to demonstrate what they had been doing. Awards and rewards were presented and when everyone had gone the team treated themselves to a meal and then home for a much-deserved rest.

At the end of the project it was clear to see the change in the students who were visibly and verbally more confident. Parents expressed praise and in one particular case astonishment about how enthusiastic her son was about his experience and how much he had 'developed' in the space of a week.

However the impact of this event was not only measureable in terms of the development of the children. The trainee teachers involved in the project identified many advantages associated with their engagement. As one explains "I found watching the teachers (and other trainees) really valuable...it helped me to reflect upon my own practice...to get ideas about different approaches I would not have thought about before, things to try out myself on my next placement". Following the event and now on her synoptic placement, one trainee who engaged in the Worden project has taken the lead in organising a trip for students to this year's Design and Technology with ICT show in Birmingham; "I enjoyed everything...especially being able to work intensively with small groups of students and see them develop so much in just a few days it was amazing...without the pressure of being on teaching placement I felt I was able to learn so much more, if you get the chance I'd definitely recommend it to anyone training to teach".



Day six: Students create props for advertising campaigns



Day seven: Students perform extension activities to finalise manufacture and promotion of merchandise

"All the trainees really got stuck in and were a great help. They were a credit to the teacher training programme offered by Edge Hill."

Suzie Carr – Summer school co-ordinator

"Watching students quickly make new friends and develop as a team, under the leadership of our Year 10 students is inspiring."

Keith Burroughs
Head of Design and Technology at Worden